

*Amendments to the Specification*

Please **delete** the paragraph on page 1 beginning “Many methods are employed...” and **replace** it with the following paragraph.

Many methods are employed to protect merchantable items from theft or forgery. Car chassis and engines have serial numbers, credit cards have holographic icons, etc. Ultimately, all these devices can be defeated by either removal or replication. Ideally, an [[time]] **item** would be marked with a security device which was impossible to remove or replicate, or where the effort required to remove or replicate it exceeded the value of the item itself.